



Highlights of the **California Energy Commission's** **Diversity Outreach**



AUGUST 2017

CEC-180-2017-001-BR

The California Energy Commission recognizes that the Golden State's promise, success, and innovation stem from the rich and diverse qualities and abilities of its people.

It is this recognition that drives the Energy Commission to promote diversity on a wide range of fronts, whether that is increasing the participation of diverse businesses in grant programs; delivering the benefits of energy efficiency, renewable energy and clean tech jobs to disadvantaged communities; recruiting a diverse workforce; or using its purchasing power to ensure involvement from and benefits to all corners of the state.

In 2015, the Energy Commission adopted a diversity resolution outlining a commitment to ensure all Californians have an opportunity to participate in and benefit from the agency's programs.

Senate Bill 350 required the Energy Commission to study the barriers to and opportunities for expanding low-income residents' access to energy efficiency, weatherization, and renewable energy. It also required examining barriers to contracting opportunities for local small businesses. The study highlighted potential solutions to tackle those barriers. The study also recommended the Energy Commission's Electric Program Investment Charge (EPIC) target a minimum of 25 percent of technology demonstration and deployment funding for sites located in disadvantaged communities.

The Energy Commission's ongoing diversity outreach is illustrated in the work conducted by its divisions.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY DIVISION

The Energy Efficiency Division sets appliance and building standards that establish California as the world's leader in energy efficiency. These standards, combined with programs that provide technical support and funding to schools and local governments for efficiency improvements, save Californians money, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and create clean energy jobs.

Proposition 39 Provides Energy Savings to Schools

The Clean Energy Jobs Act (Proposition 39) has delivered more than \$1 billion to schools to provide efficient lighting systems, heating-air conditioning systems, and renewable energy projects. About 70 percent of the funds have gone to disadvantaged communities.

Energy Improvements Through Audits

The Bright School Program provides energy audits to K-12 school districts to determine where best to improve building efficiencies. In the past four years, 75 percent of program participants were from disadvantaged communities.

Zero-Interest Loans for Energy Efficiency

The Energy Conservation Assistance Act program provides zero-interest loans for energy efficiency and clean energy generation projects. Since 2013, 65 percent of the loans have gone to projects in disadvantaged communities.

Local Government Leadership and Innovation

The Local Government Challenge program funds the deployment of innovative energy-efficiency projects. Seven of 13 grant recipients developed plans or projects benefiting disadvantaged communities.



RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

The Research and Development Division conducted several outreach activities during 2016 to ensure a diverse range of applicants participated in research funding opportunities.

EPIC Solicitations

In 2016, 8 out of 12 EPIC solicitations released included bonus points for projects that are located in and benefit disadvantaged communities.

Smart Charger Demonstrations for Electric Vehicle Fleets

Fresno, Bakersfield, Merced, and Stockton received funds to test smart charger solutions for electric delivery trucks to demonstrate clean transportation alternatives for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.

Residential-Scale Energy Retrofits

To bring to market nonintrusive energy efficiency retrofits for dwellings, demonstration projects are underway at multifamily developments in Fresno and Ontario.

Habitat for Humanity High-Performance Housing

Homes will be built in Stockton using lessons from high-performance housing research. The homes, which will be built in partnership with Habitat for Humanity, include advanced architectural design features, HVAC systems, and low-cost water heating systems.

FUELS AND TRANSPORTATION DIVISION

The Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program invests in alternative fuel and advanced vehicle technology projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce petroleum use, and improve air quality.

Electric Buses

The city of Gardena used a grant to repower five gasoline-electric hybrid buses to fully electric. The buses will serve economically disadvantaged communities.

Zero-Emission Technology Deployment at California Seaports

Zero-emission vehicle technologies are being demonstrated at major freight distribution seaports, will reduce air pollution, and address challenges faced by surrounding communities.

Biofuels to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

In 2016, the Energy Commission funded 10 projects to produce low-carbon biofuels to encourage in-state production. About 92 percent of the funds were distributed to disadvantaged communities.

Infrastructure for Clean Fuels

Grants were approved for compressed natural gas fueling stations for school buses at the Exeter, Kings Canyon, and Lemoore school districts. These projects will significantly improve air quality.

Fast Chargers for Electric Vehicles

One-hundred-ninety-one fast chargers for electric vehicles were funded along major California highways, including 33 in the Central Valley and Riverside and San Bernardino counties. These publicly accessible chargers will support electric vehicle travel in these disadvantaged communities.



RENEWABLE ENERGY DIVISION

The Renewable Energy Division advances renewable energy as a key part of the state's efforts to build a clean energy economy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

New Solar Homes Partnership

In 2016, the New Solar Homes Partnership program provided incentives to about 20 affordable housing projects. These incentives helped install 1.5 megawatts (MW) of new solar capacity. They also helped reduce electricity bills for those living in more than 400 affordable homes.

ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

The Administration Division works to include businesses from disadvantaged communities and recruit a workforce that reflects the state's diversity.

Vendor Diversity

The division established a "small business first" policy for goods purchased and provides preference points to small businesses and Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) contractors. A minimum contracting goal of 25 percent with small businesses and 3 percent with DVBE was set.

Recruiting a Diverse Workforce

A recruitment effort was launched at three Central Valley universities. Staff organized an outreach event at the University of California, Merced and conducted employment exams at Fresno State, Sacramento State and UC Merced.

SITING, TRANSMISSION AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

The Siting, Transmission and Environmental Protection Division licenses thermal power plants 50 MW and larger. Among the factors included in the environmental review is whether the proposed project will disproportionately impact a disadvantaged community.

Community Outreach

Staff reaches out to local communities. The outreach includes contacting property owners, local elected officials, low-income residents, and community groups.

Tribal Advisor

The tribal consultation program ensures that the cultural resources of Native American tribes are considered in the Energy Commission's review of proposed projects. In 2016, more than 200 letters were sent to tribes.

PUBLIC ADVISER

The Public Adviser's Office ensures public access to full and adequate participation in Energy Commission proceedings. It is a resource for stakeholders and disadvantaged communities. The office, which implements the agency's diversity commitment, coordinates a diversity career fair and the Summer Institute for Energy Law and Policy, a program for ethnically diverse and economically disadvantaged high school students.

More about the Energy Commission's diversity commitment is at www.energy.ca.gov/commission/diversity or by calling (800) 822-6228.

